

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method of forming a report definition file for governing access to or presentation of data from a database, the method comprising:

inputting from a thin client, a set of report specifications; and
converting the set of report specifications into the report definition file, the report definition file being in a format defined by a markup language having user definable tags and that describes a relationship between a document's content and structure.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein:
the thin client consists essentially of a world wide web browser.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein:
the markup language is extensible markup language (XML).

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
storing the report definition file for use in a subsequent report output method.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the inputting step includes:
inputting the report specifications using an report definition wizard that guides a user with report definition options.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, further comprising:
transforming the report specifications into a runtime data structure; and
marshaling the runtime data structure into the report definition file that is in extensible markup language (XML).

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the inputting step includes:
inputting the report specification in the form of standard query language (SQL) commands entered through the thin client.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 7, further comprising:
parsing and validating the SQL commands; and
marshaling the SQL commands into the report definition file that is in extensible markup language (XML).

9. (Original) A method of outputting data from a database in a report governed by a report definition file, including the report definition file forming method of Claim 1, and further comprising:

converting the report definition file to a report file expressed in commands of a database query language (SQL);

retrieving the data from the database in accordance with the report file; and
outputting the retrieved data in a format governed at least in part by the report file.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of outputting data from a database in a report governed by a report definition file, the method comprising:

retrieving the report definition file, the report definition file being in a format defined by a markup language (~~XML~~) having user definable tags and that describes a relationship between a document's content and structure;

converting the report definition file to a report file expressed in commands of a database query language (~~SQL~~);

retrieving the data from the database in accordance with the report file; and
outputting the retrieved data in a format governed at least in part by the report file.

11. (CANCELED)

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of Claim ~~11~~ 10, wherein:
the database query language is standard query language (SQL).

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of Claim ~~11~~ 10, wherein:
the markup language is extensible markup language (XML).

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of Claim ~~11~~ 10, further comprising:
presenting the ~~(SQL)~~ report file to the user; and
obtaining an input indicating the user's approval of the report file.

15. (Original) A computer program product including computer executable code or computer executable instructions that, when executed, causes a computer to perform the method of Claim 1.

16. (Original) A computer program product including computer executable code or computer executable instructions that, when executed, causes a computer to perform the method of Claim 9.

17. (Original) A computer program product including computer executable code or computer executable instructions that, when executed, causes a computer to perform the method of Claim 10.

18. (Original) A system configured to perform the method of Claim 1.

19. (Original) A system configured to perform the method of Claim 10.

20. (Original) An arrangement for outputting data from a domain database in a report governed by a report definition file that is in XML format, the arrangement comprising:

a definition wizard configured to provide report definition options to a thin client, and to input user selections through the thin client that govern creation of the report definition file;

an SQL builder configured to construct Standard Query Language (SQL) based on definition attributes generated from user inputs;

an XML engine configured to store, retrieve, transform, and process the XML-format report definition file based on either the definition wizard or the SQL builder; and

a data retriever configured to assemble and generate the data from the domain database in accordance with the report definition file.